

L E T T E R S  
F R O M  
Y O R I C K T O E L I Z A .



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TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE  
LORD APSLEY,  
LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR  
OF ENGLAND.

MY LORD,

THE Editor of the following  
Letters, is so far from having  
tasted your Lordship's bounty, that  
he is, and perhaps ever must re-  
main, a stranger to your person,  
consequently no adulation is to be  
apprehended from him—

He leaves it to the weak and op-  
pressed, the widow and orphan, to  
proclaim your Lordship's virtues in  
your public capacity; that which

B

he

he would celebrate is of a private nature, namely, your filial affection, which is so conspicuous, that he flatters himself a Volume of Letters written by such a person as Mr. STERNE, in which your noble father is placed in a light so truly amiable, cannot fail of engaging your Lordship's gracious acceptance and protection—in this hope, and upon this foundation, he presumes to dedicate these papers to your Lordship, and to have the honour of subscribing himself,

My Lord,

your Lordship's

most obedient,

and most humble Servant,

THE EDITOR.

## P R E F A C E.

**T**HE foul and infamous traffic, between dishonest booksellers, and profligate scribblers, which has subsisted for more than a century, has justly brought posthumous publications under suspicion, in England, France, and more especially in Holland: ministers of state in every European court, great generals, royal mistresses, authors of established reputation, in a word, all such as have had the misfortune to advance themselves to eminence,

have been obliged to leave behind them parcels of letters, and other memoirs, of the most secret and important transactions of their times, in which, every fact beyond the information of a news-paper or coffee-house chat is so faithfully misrepresented, every character delineated with such punctual deviation from the truth, and causes and effects which have no possible relation, are with such amazing effrontery obtruded upon the public, that it is no wonder if men of sense, who read for instruction as well as entertainment, generally condemn them in the lump, never, or very rarely, affording them the honour  
of

of a perusal,—the publisher of these letters, however, has not the smallest apprehension that any part of this well grounded censure can fall to his share ; he deals not in surprising events to astonish the reader, nor in characters (one excepted) which have figured on the great theatre of the world ; he purposely waves all proofs which might be drawn concerning their authenticity, from the character of the gentleman who had the perusal of the originals, and, with Eliza's permission, faithfully copied them at Bombay in the East Indies ; from the testimony of many reputable families in this city, who knew and loved Eliza, carested and admired

mired Mr. Sterne, and were well acquainted with the tender friendship between them, from many curious anecdotes in the letters themselves, any one of which were fully sufficient to authenticate them, and submits his reputation to the taste and discernment of the commonest reader, who must, in one view perceive that these letters are genuine, beyond any possibility of doubt,—as the public is unquestionably entitled to every kind of information concerning the characters contained in these letters, which consists with the duties of humanity and a good citizen, that is, a minute acquaintance with those of whom honourable

able mention is made, or the publisher is furnished with authorities to vindicate from Mr. Sterne's censures, which as a man of warm temper and lively imagination, he was perhaps sometimes hurried into without due reflection, he persuades himself that no party concerned, will or can be offended with this publication, especially if it is considered that without such information it would be cold and unentertaining; that by publishing their merits he cannot be understood to intend them any injury, and without it, it would in himself fail in his duty to the public.—Eliza, the lady to whom these letters are addressed, is Mrs. Elizabeth

Elizabeth Draper, wife of Daniel Draper, Esq; counsellor at Bombay, and at present chief of the English factory at Surat, a gentleman very much respected in that quarter of the globe—she is by birth an East Indian; but the circumstance of being born in the country not proving sufficient to defend her delicate frame against the heats of that burning climate, she came to England for the recovery of her health, when by accident she became acquainted with Mr. Sterne, he immediately discovered in her a mind so congenial with his own, so enlightened, so refined, and so tender, that their mutual attraction presently joined

2

them

them in the closest union that purity could possibly admit of; he loved her as his friend, and prided in her as his pupil; all her concerns became presently his; her health, her circumstances, her reputation, her children were his; his fortune, his time, his country, were at her disposal, so far as the sacrifice of all or any of these might, in his opinion, contribute to her real happiness. If it is asked whether the glowing heat of Mr. Sterne's affection never transported him to a flight beyond the limits of pure platonism, the publisher will not take upon him absolutely to deny it; but this he thinks, so far from

C

leaving

leaving any stain upon that gentleman's memory, that it perhaps includes his fairest encomium, since to cherish the seeds of piety and chastity in a heart which the passions are interested to corrupt, must be allowed to be the noblest effort of a soul fraught and fortified with the justest sentiments of religion and virtue.—Mr. and Mrs. James, so frequently and honourably mentioned in these letters, are the worthy heads of an opulent family in this city : their character is too well established to need the aid of the publisher in securing the estimation they so well deserve, and universally possess, yet, he cannot restrain one observation ;

observation; that to have been respected and beloved by Mr. Sterne and Mrs. Draper, is no inconsiderable testimony of their merit, and such as it cannot be displeasing to them to see published to the world.

—Miss Light, now Mrs. Stratton, is on all accounts a very amiable young lady—she was accidentally a passenger in the same ship with Eliza, and instantly engaged her friendship and esteem, but being mentioned in one of Mrs. Draper's letters to Mr. Sterne, in somewhat of a comparative manner with herself, his partiality for her, as she modestly expressed it, took the alarm, and betrayed him into some

expressions, the coarseness of which cannot be excused. Mrs. Draper declares that this lady was entirely unknown to him, and infinitely superior to his idea of her: she has been lately married to George Stratton, Esq; counsellor at Madras.—The manner in which Mr. Sterne's acquaintance with the celebrated Lord Bathurst, the friend and companion of Addison, Swift, Pope, Steele, and all the finest wits of the last age, commenced, cannot fail to attract the attention of the curious reader: here, that great man is social and unreserved, unshakled with that sedulity in supporting a feigned character which exposes  
 most

most of his rank to the contempt of wise men, and the ridicule of their valet de chambre; here he appears the same as in his hours of festivity and happiness with Swift and Addison, superior to forms and ceremonies, and, in his eighty-fifth year, abounding in wit, vivacity and humanity: methinks, the pleasure of such a gentleman's acquaintance resembles that of conversing with superior beings; but it is not fit to dwell longer on this pleasing topic, least it should anticipate the reader's pleasure in perusing the letter itself. One remark however it suggests, which may be useful to old men in general, namely, that it  
 appears

appears by his Lordship's example, the four contracted spirit observable in old age, is not specifically an effect of years, altho' they are commonly pleaded in its excuse. Old men would therefore do well to correct this odious quality in themselves; or, if that must not be, to invent a better apology for it. It is very much to be lamented, that Eliza's modesty was invincible to all the publisher's endeavours to obtain her answers to these letters: her wit, penetration and judgment, her happiness in the epistolary style, so rapturously commended by Mr. Sterne, could not fail to furnish a rich entertainment for the public.

The

The publisher could not help telling her, that he wished to God she really was possessed of that vanity with which she was charged ; to which she replied, that she was so far from acquitting herself of vanity, that she suspected that to be the cause why she could not prevail on herself to submit her letters to the public eye ; for altho' Mr. Sterne was partial to every thing of her's, she could not hope that the world would be so too. With this answer he was obliged to be contented ; yet cannot reflect without deep concern, that this elegant accomplishment, so peculiarly adapted to the refined and delicate understandings  
of

of ladies should be yet so rare, that we can boast of only one Lady Wortley Montague among us; and that Eliza, in particular, could not be prevailed on to follow the example of that admired lady. The reader will remark that these letters have various signatures; sometimes he signs Sterne, sometimes Yorick, and to one or two he signs her Bramin. Altho' it is pretty generally known who the Bramins are, yet least any body should be at a loss, it may not be amiss to observe, that the principal cast or tribe among the idolatrous Indians are the Bramins, and out of the chief class of this cast comes the priests so famous

for their austerities, and the shocking torments, and frequently death, they voluntary expose themselves to, on a religious account. Now, as Mr. Sterne was a clergyman, and Eliza an Indian by birth, it was customary with her to call him her Bramin, which he accordingly, in his pleasant moods, uses as a signature.——

It remains only to take some notice of the family, marked with asterisks, on whom Mr. Sterne has thought proper to shed the bitterest gall of his pen. It is however evident, even from some passages in the letters themselves, that

D

Mrs.

Mrs. Draper could not be easily prevailed on to see this family in the same odious light in which they appeared to her perhaps over zealous friend. He, in the heat, or I may say, hurry of his affection, might have accepted suspicious circumstances as real evidences of guilt, or listened too unguardedly to the insinuations of their enemies.——

Be that as it may, as the publisher is not furnished with sufficient authorities to exculpate them, he chuses to drop the ungrateful subject, heartily wishing, that this family may not only be innocent  
of

of the shocking treachery with which they are charged, but may be able to make their innocence appear clearly to the world ; otherwise, that no person may be industrious enough to make known their name.

[Faint, illegible text]

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[Faint, illegible text]

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**E**LIZA will receive my books with this—the summons came all hot from the heart; I wish that could give them any title to be offered to yours; the others came from the head—I am more indifferent about their reception—

I know not how it comes, but I am half in love with you—I ought to be wholly so; for I never valued (or saw more good qualities to value) or thought more of one of your sex than of you—so adieu.

Yours faithfully,

if not affectionately——

L—— S——NE.

I CAN-

I CANNOT rest Eliza, tho' I shall call on you at half past twelve, till I know how you do—may thy dear face smile as thou risest, like the sun of this morning! I was much griev'd to hear of your alarming indisposition yesterday; and disappointed too at not being let in “—Remember, my dear, that a friend “ has the same right as a physician;”—the etiquettes of this town (you'll say) say otherwise; no matter, delicacy and property do not always consist in observing their frigid doctrines—I am going out to breakfast, but shall be at my lodgings by eleven, when I hope to read a single line under thy own hand, that thou art better, and will be glad to see thy

Nine o'clock.

BRAMIN.

**I** GOT thy letter last night, Eliza, on my return from Lord Bathurst's, where I din'd; and where I was heard (as I talk'd of thee for an hour without intermission) with so much pleasure and attention, that the good old Lord toasted your health three several times; and tho' he is now in his eighty-fifth year, says he hopes to live long enough to be introduced as a friend, to my fair Indian disciple; and to see her eclipse all other Nabobesses as much in wealth, as she already does in exterior, and (what is far better) in interior merit—I hope so too.

This nobleman is an old friend of mine. You know he was always the  
protector

protector of men of wit and genius, and had those of the last century, Addison, Steele, Pope, Swift, Prior, &c. &c. always at his table.—

The manner in which his notice of me began was singular, as it was polite: he came up to me one day, as I was at the Princess of Wales's court——“I want to  
 “ know you, Mr. St—ne; but it is fit  
 “ you should also know who it is that  
 “ wishes this pleasure. You have heard,” continued he, “of an old Lord Bathurst,  
 “ of whom your Pope's and Swift's have  
 “ sung and spoken so much: I have lived  
 “ my life with geniuses of that cast, but  
 “ have surviv'd them; and despairing ever  
 “ to find their equals, 'tis some years since  
 “ I clos'd my accounts, and shut up my  
 “ books, with thoughts of never open-  
 “ ing

“ ing them again ; but you have kindled  
 “ a desire in me to open them once  
 “ more before I die, which I now do—  
 “ so go home and dine with me ? ”

This nobleman, I say, is a prodigy !  
 for at eighty five he has all the wit and  
 promptness of a man of thirty—a disposi-  
 tion to be pleased, and a power to please  
 others, beyond whatever I knew ; added  
 to which, a man of learning, courtesy  
 and feeling——

He heard me talk of thee, Eliza, with  
 uncommon satisfaction ; for there was  
 only a third person, and of sensibility,  
 with us—and a most sentimental after-  
 noon till nine o'clock, have we passed !  
 But thou, Eliza, was the star that con-  
 ducted and enlighten'd the discourse !

E

and

and when I talk'd not of thee, still didst thou fill my mind, and warm every thought I utter'd ! for I am not ashamed to acknowledge, I greatly miss thee——best of all good girls ! the sufferings I have sustained all night on account of thine, Eliza, are beyond my power of words——assuredly does heaven give strength proportion'd to the weight it lays upon us——Thou hast been bow'd down, my child, with every burden that sorrow of heart and pain of body could inflict on a poor being——and still thou tell'st me thou art beginning to get ease, thy fever gone——thy sickness, the pain in thy side, vanishing also——

May every evil so vanish, that thwarts Eliza's happiness, or but awakens her fears for a moment.—Fear nothing, my dear ;

dear; hope every thing, and the balm of this passion will shed its influence on thy health, and make thee enjoy a spring of youth and chearfulness, more than thou hast hardly yet tasted——

And so thou hast fix'd thy Bramin's portrait over thy writing-desk, and will consult it in all doubts and difficulties;——Grateful good girl! Yorick smiles contentedly over all thou dost; his picture does not do justice to his own complacency——

Thy sweet little plan and distribution of thy time, how worthy of thee!

Indeed, Eliza, thou leavest me nothing to direct thee in; thou leavest me nothing to require, nothing to ask, but

a continuance of that conduct which won my esteem, and has made me thy friend for ever.

May the roses come quick back to thy cheek, and the rubies to thy lips! but trust my declaration, Eliza, that thy husband (if he is the good feeling man I wish him) will press thee to him with more honest warmth and affection, and kiss thy pale poor dejected face, with more transport than he wou'd be able to do in in the best bloom of all thy beauty—and so he ought. I pity him—he must have strange feelings, if he knows not the value of such a creature as thou art——

I am glad Miss Light goes with you, she may relieve you from many anxious moments.——

I am

I am glad too, that your shipmates are friendly beings—you cou'd least dispense with what is contrary to thy own nature, which is soft and gentle. Eliza, it wou'd civilize savages; tho' pity were it, thou should'ft be tainted with the office—

How canst thou make apologies for thy last letter! 'tis most delicious to me, for the very reasons you excuse it,—

Write to me, my child, only such; let them speak the easy chearfulness of a heart that opens itself any how, and every how, to a man you ought to esteem and trust—

Such, Eliza, I write to thee, and so I should ever live with thee, most artlessly, most affectionately, if Providence permitted

[ 30 ]

mitted thy residence in the same section  
of the globe; for I am all that honour  
and inclination can make me,

Thy

BRAMIN.

I WRITE

**I** WRITE this, Eliza, at Mr. James's, whilst he is dressing, and the dear girl his wife is writing beside me, to thee——

I got your melancholy billet before we sat down to dinner; 'tis melancholy indeed, my dear, to hear so piteous an account of thy sickness; thou art encompassed with evil enow, without that additional weight——I fear it will sink thy poor soul, and body with it, past recovering——Heaven supply thee with fortitude! we have talk'd of nothing but thee, Eliza, and of thy sweet virtues, and endearing conduct, the whole afternoon.——

Mrs.

Mrs. James and the Bramin have mixed their tears a hundred times, in speaking of thy hardships, thy goodness, thy graces: 'tis a subject that will never end between us——Oh, she is good and friendly !

The \* \* \* by heaven are worthless ; I have heard enough to tremble at the articulation of the name.——How cou'd you, Eliza, leave them (or suffer them to leave you rather) with impressions the least favourable? I have told thee enough to plant disgust against their treachery to thee, to the last hour of thy life ; yet still, thou told'st Mrs. James at last, that thou believest they affectionately loved thee——her delicacy to my Eliza, and true regard to her ease of mind, have saved thee from hearing  
more

more glaring proofs of their baseness.  
 —For God's sake write not to them,  
 nor foul thy fair characters with such  
 polluted hearts,—They love thee!—  
 What proof?—Is it their actions  
 which say so? or their zeal for those  
 attachments which do thee honour,  
 and make thee happy? Or their  
 tenderness for thy fame?—No;  
 but they weep, and say tender things.  
 —Adieu to all such for ever.—

Mrs. James's honest heart revolts  
 against the idea of even returning  
 them one visit. I honour her, and  
 honour thee, for almost every act of  
 thy life, but this blind partiality to  
 an unworthy being.

F

Forgive

Forgive my zeal, dear girl, and allow me a right, which arises only out of that fund of affection I have, and shall preserve for thee, to the hour of my death——

Reflect, Eliza, what are my motives for perpetually advising thee: think, whether I can have any which proceed not from the cause I have mentioned?

I think you a very deserving woman, and that you want nothing but firmness, and a better opinion of yourself, to be the best female character I know.

I wish

I wish I cou'd inspire you with a share of that vanity your enemies lay to your charge (tho' to me it has never been visible) because I think in a well turn'd mind it will produce good effects.——

I probably shall never see you more ; yet flatter myself you will sometimes think of me with pleasure, because you must be convinced I love you, and so interest myself in your rectitude, that I had rather hear of any evil befalling you, than your want of reverence for yourself——I had not power to keep this remonstrance in my breast——'tis now out——So adieu ; heaven watch over my Eliza. Thine,

YORICK.

**T**O whom shou'd Eliza apply in her distress, but to the friend that loves her: why then, my dear, do you apologize for employing me?

Yorick would be offended, and with reason, if you ever sent commissions to another, which he cou'd execute—— I have been with Zumps—and first, your piano-forte must be tuned from the bass middle string of your guitar, which is C.——I have got you a hammer too, and a pair of pliers to twist your wire with; and may every one of them, my dear, vibrate sweet comfort to thy hopes!

I have

I have bought you ten handsome brass screws to hang your necessaries upon: I purchased twelve, but stole a couple from you to put up in my own cabin at Coywauld—I shall never hang or take my hat off one of them but I shall think of you——I have bought thee moreover a couple of iron screws, which are more to be depended upon than brass for the globe——

I have wrote also to Mr. Abraham Walker, pilot at Deal, to acquaint him that I had dispatched these in a packet directed to his care, which I desired he would seek after the moment the Deal machine arrives——I have moreover given directions to him,  
what

what sort of an arm chair you wou'd want, and have directed him to purchase the best that Deal cou'd afford, and to take it with the parcel in the first boat that went off.—Would I cou'd, Eliza, thus supply all thy wants, and all thy wishes! it would be a state of happiness to me—

The journal is as it should be, all but its contents—

Poor dear patient being! I do more than pity you; for I think I lose both firmness and philosophy as I figure to myself your distresses;—Do not think I spoke last night with too much asperity of \* \* \*, there was a cause, and besides, a good heart ought not to love

a bad one, and indeed cannot; but  
adieu to the ungrateful subject—

I have been this morning to see  
Mrs. James; she loves thee tenderly  
and unfeignedly; she is alarmed for  
thee; she says thou lookest most ill  
and melancholly on going away;—she  
pities thee—I shall visit her every Sun-  
day while I am in town——

As this may be my last letter, I  
earnestly bid thee farewell! may the  
God of kindness, be kind to thee, and  
approve himself thy protector, now  
thou art defenceless! and for thy daily  
comfort bear in thy mind this truth,  
“ that whatever measure of sorrow and  
dullness is thy portion, it will be re-  
paid

paid to thee in a full measure of happiness, by the Being thou hast wisely chosen for thy eternal friend——  
Farewel, farewel Eliza; while I live, count upon me as the most disinterested and warm of earthly friends.

YORICK.

My

My dearest Eliza,

**I** Began a new journal this morning: you shall see it, for if I live not till you return to England, I will leave it you as a legacy: 'tis a sorrowful page, but I will write chearful ones; and could I write letters to thee, they should be chearful ones too, but few (I fear) will reach thee—however, depend upon receiving something of the kindly every post, till thou wavest thy hand, and bid'st me write no more——

G

Tell

Tell me how you are, and what sort of fortitude heaven inspires thee with : how are your accommodations, my dear ?—Is all right ?——Scribble away any thing, and every thing to me.

Depend upon seeing me at Deal with the James's, should you be detained there by contrary winds.—Indeed, Eliza, I should with pleasure fly to you, could I be the means of rendering you any services, or doing you any kindness——

“ Gracious and merciful God, consider the anguish of a poor girl——strengthen and preserve her, in all the shocks her frame must be exposed to ;  
she

she is now without protector but thee;  
save her from all the accidents of a  
dangerous element, and give her com-  
fort at the last.—”

My prayer, Eliza, I hope is  
heard, for the sky seems to smile upon  
me as I look up to it——

I am just returned from our dear  
Mrs. James's, where I have been talk-  
ing of thee these three hours—she has  
got your picture, and likes it; but  
Mariot and some other judges agree,  
that mine is the better, and expres-  
sive of a sweeter character; but what  
is that to the original?——Yet I ac-  
knowledge her's a picture for the  
world, and mine only calculated to

please a very sincere friend, or sentimental philosopher.—

In the one you are dressed in smiles, and with all the advantages of silks, pearls, and ermine; in the other, simple as a vestal, appearing the good girl nature made you; which to me conveys an idea of more unaffected sweetness than Mrs. D—p—r habited for conquest in a birth-day suit, with her countenance animated, and “dimples visible”——

If I remember right, Eliza, you endeavour'd to collect every charm of your person into your face, with more than common care, the day you sat for Mrs. James's; your colour too  
brighten'd

brighten'd, and your eyes shone with more than their usual brilliancy——

I then requested you to come simple and unadorn'd when you sat for me, knowing (as I see with unprejudiced eyes) that you cou'd receive no addition from the silk-worm's aid, or jeweller's polish——

Let me now tell you a truth, which I believe I utter'd before—when I first saw you, I beheld you as an object of compassion, and a very plain woman——

The mode of your dress (the fashionable) disfigured you——but nothing now cou'd render you such, but  
the

the being solicitous to make yourself admired as a handsome one——

You are not handsome, Eliza—nor is your's a face that will please the tenth part of your beholders——

But you are something more; for I scruple not to tell you, I never saw so intelligent, so animated, so good a countenance; nor ever was there, nor will there be, that man of sense, tenderness and feeling, in your company three hours, that was not or will not be your admirer and friend in consequence of it; that is, if you assume or assumed no character foreign to your own, but appear'd the artless being nature design'd you for—  
a some-

a something in your voice and eyes, you possess in a degree more persuasive than any woman I ever saw, read, or heard of:—but it is that bewitching sort of nameless excellence, that men of *nice sensibility* alone can be touch'd with——

Was your husband in England, I wou'd freely give him five hundred pounds (if money cou'd purchase the acquisition) to let you only sit by me two hours in the day, while I wrote my Sentimental Journey——I am sure the work wou'd sell so much the better for it, that I should be reimbursed the sum more than seven times told——

I would

I would not give nine-pence for the picture of you that the —— have got executed ; it is the resemblance of a concerted made-up coquette—— your eyes, and the shape of your face (the latter, the most perfect oval I ever saw) which are perfections that must strike the most indifferent judge, because they are equal to any of God's works, in a similar way, and finer than any I beheld in all my travels, are manifestly inspired by the affected leer of the one, and strange appearance of the other, owing to the attitude of the head ; which is a proof of the artist's or your friend's false taste.

The

The \* \* \* 's verify the character I once gave, of teasing and sticking like pitch or bird-lime——

—Sent a card that they wou'd wait on Mrs. \* \* \* on Friday.——

She sent back she was engag'd—

—Then, to meet at Ranelagh to-night; she answer'd, she did not go—

She says, if she allows the least footing, she never shall get rid of the acquaintance, which she is resolv'd to drop at once.——

She knows them; she knows they are not her friends or your's, and the

H

first

first use they wou'd make of being with her, would be to sacrifice you to her (if they could) a second time.—

Let her not, then, let her not, my dear, be a greater friend to thee than thou art to thyself: she begs I will reiterate my request to you, that you will not write to them——'twill give her, and thy Bramin too, inexpressible pain——Be assured, all this is not without reason on her side; I have my reasons too, the first of which is, that I should grieve to excess if Eliza wanted that fortitude her Yorick has built so high upon——

I said, I wou'd never more mention the name to thee; and had I not received

ceived it as a kind of charge from a dear woman that loves you, I should not have broke my word——

I will write again to-morrow to thee, thou best, and most endearing of girls: a peaceful night to thee; my spirit will be with thee thro' every watch of it.——Adieu.

My dear Eliza,

**O**H! I grieve for your cabin; and fresh painting will be enough to destroy every nerve about thee,—nothing so pernicious as white lead—Take care of yourself, dear girl, and sleep not in it too soon, 'twill be enough to give you a stroke of an epilepsy——

I hope you will have left the ship, and that my letters may meet and greet you, as you get out of your post-chaise at Deal—When you have got them all, put them, my dear, into some order——the first eight or nine  
are

are number'd, but I wrote the rest without that direction to thee—but thou wilt find them out by the day or hour, which, I hope, I have generally prefix'd to them: when they are got together in chronological order, few them together under a cover—— I trust, they will be a perpetual refuge to thee from time to time, and that thou wilt (when weary of fools and uninteresting discourse) retire, and converse an hour with them and me——

I have not had power, or the heart to aim at enlivening one of them with a single stroke of wit or humour; but they contain something better, and what you will feel more suited to  
your

your situation—a long detail of much advice, truth and knowledge.—

I hope too, you will perceive loose touches of an honest heart in every one of them, which speak more than the most studied periods, and will give thee more ground of trust and reliance upon Yorick, than all that labour'd eloquence cou'd supply— Lean then thy whole weight, Eliza, upon them, and upon me.

“ May poverty, distress, anguish  
 “ and shame be my portion, if ever I  
 “ give thee reason to repent the know-  
 “ ledge of me.”——

With

With this asseveration, made in the presence of a just God, I pray to him that so it may speed with me, as I deal candidly and honourably with thee——

I would not mislead thee, Eliza; I would not injure thee in the opinion of a single individual, for the richest crown the proudest monarch wears——

Remember, that while I have life and power, whatever is mine, you may style, and think your's; tho' sorry should I be, if ever my friendship was put to the test thus, for your own delicacy's sake——

Money

Money and counters are of equal use, in my opinion; they both serve to set up with—I hope you will answer in this letter; but if thou art debarr'd by the elements which hurry thee away, I will write one for thee, and knowing it is such an one as thou would'st have written, I will regard it as my Eliza's——

Honour and happiness, and health and comforts of every kind sail along with thee, thou most worthy of girls!——

I will live for thee and my Lydia,  
be rich for the dear children of my  
heart, gain wisdom, gain fame and  
happiness,

happinefs, to fhare them with thee  
and her in my old age——

Once for all, adieu; preferve thy  
life fteadily, purfue the ends we pro-  
pofed, and let nothing rob thee of  
thofe powers heaven has given thee  
for thy well being——

What can I add more in the agita-  
tion of mind I am in, and within five  
minutes of the laft poft-man's bell, but  
recommend thee to heaven, and re-  
commend myfelf to heaven with thee,  
in the fame fervent ejaculation :

“ That we may be happy and meet  
“ again—if not in this world, in the  
“ next.”

I

Adieu;

Adieu; I am thine affectionately,  
Eliza, and everlastingly.

YORICK.

I Think

My dear Eliza,

**I** Think you could act no otherwise than you did with your young soldier; there was no shutting the door against him, either in politeness or humanity——

Thou tell'st me he seems susceptible of tender impressions, and that before Miss L——t has sailed a fortnight he will be in love with her——

Now I think it a thousand times more likely, that he attaches himself to thee, Eliza, because thou art a thousand times more amiable——

Five months with Eliza, and in the same room, and an amorous son of Mars besides, “ It no can be Maffer.”

The sun if he could avoid it, wou’d not shine upon a dunghill; but his rays are so pure, Eliza, and celestial, I never heard they were polluted by it—Just such will thine be my dearest child, in this and every such situation as you will be exposed to, till thou art fixed for life.—

But, thy discretion, thy wisdom, thy honour, the spirit of thy Yorick, and thy own spirit, which is equal to it, will be thy ablest counsellors—

Surely

Surely by this time, something is doing towards thy accommodation—but why may not clean washing and rubbing do, instead of painting your cabin as it is to be hung—Paint is so pernicious both to your nerves and lungs, and will keep you so much longer too out of possession of your apartments, where I hope you will pass some of your happiest hours—

I fear the best of your shipmates are only genteel by comparison with the contrasted crew with which thou must behold them;—so was you know who, from the same fallacy that was put upon the judgment, when—but I will not mortify you—if they are decent and distant, it is enough, and as  
much

much as is to be expected ; if any of them are more, I rejoice—

Thou wilt want every aid, and 'tis thy due to have them——

Be cautious only, my dear, of intimacies ;—good hearts are open, and fall naturally into them——Heaven inspire thine with fortitude, in this and every other deadly trial !

Best of God's works ! farewell—  
love me I beseech thee, and remember  
for ever, I am, my Eliza, and ever  
will be, in the most comprehensive  
sense,

Thy friend,

YORICK.

P. S. Probably you will have an opportunity of writing to me by some Dutch or French ship, or from the Cape de Verd Islands—'twill reach me some how—

I Wish

I Wish to God, Eliza, it was possible to postpone the voyage to India for another year; for I am firmly persuaded within my own heart, that thy husband could never limit thee with regard to time—

I fear that Mr. B—, has exaggerated matters—I like not his countenance; it is absolutely killing;—should evil befall thee, what will he have not to answer for: I know not the being that will be deserving of so much pity, or that I shall hate more; he will be an outcast alien; in which case

I

I will

I will be a father to thy children, my good girl; therefore take no thought about them—

But, Eliza, if thou art so very ill, still put off all thoughts of returning to India this year—write to your husband—tell him the truth of your case—If he is the generous humane man you describe him to be, he cannot but applaud your conduct.—I am creditably informed, that his repugnance to your living in England arises only from the dread which has enter'd his brain, that thou mayest run him in debt, beyond thy appointments, and that he must discharge them——

K

That

That such a creature should be sacrificed for the paultry consideration of a few hundreds, is too, too hard!

Oh! my child, that I could with propriety indemnify him for every charge, even to the last mite that that thou hast been of to him! with joy would I give him my whole subsistence! nay, sequester my livings, and trust to the treasures Heaven has furnished my head with, for a future subsistence—

You owe much, I allow, to your husband; you owe something to appearances and the opinions of the world; but trust me, my dear, you owe much likewise to yourself; re-  
turn

turn therefore from Deal if you continue ill: I will prescribe for you gratis—you are not the first woman by many, I have done so for with success—

I will send for my wife and daughter, and they shall carry you, in pursuit of health to Montpelier, the wells of Bancois, the Spa, or whither thou wilt; thou shalt direct them, and make parties of pleasure in what corner of the world fancy points out to you—

We shall fish upon the banks of Arno, and lose ourselves in the sweet labyrinth of its vallies; and then thou should'st warble to us, as I have once

or twice heard thee.—“ I’m lost, I’m lost ;” but we would find thee again, my Eliza—

Of a similar nature to this was your physician’s prescription : “ Use gentle exercise, the pure southern air of France or milder Naples, with the society of friendly gentle beings.”

Sensible man ! he certainly entered into your feelings ; he knew the fallacy of medicine to a creature whose illness has arisen from the affliction of her mind.—Time only, my dear, I fear you must trust to, and have your reliance on ; may it give you the health so enthusiastic a votary to the charming goddess deserves—

I honour

I honour you, Eliza, for keeping secret some things, which if explained, had been a panegyric on yourself——

There is a dignity in venerable affliction which will not allow it to appeal to the world for pity or redress.——Well have you supported that character, my amiable philosophic friend! and indeed, I begin to think you have as many virtues as my uncle Toby's widow——

I don't mean to insinuate, hussy, that my opinion is no better founded than his was of Mrs. Wadman's; nor do I believe it possible for any Trim

to convince me it is equally fallacious;  
I am sure while I have my reason it  
is not.

Talking of widows—pray, Eliza,  
if ever you are such, do not think of  
giving yourself to some wealthy Na-  
bob, because I design to marry you  
myself—

—My wife cannot live long—she  
has sold all the provinces in France  
already; and I know not the woman  
I should like so well for her substitute  
as yourself—

'Tis true, I am ninety-five in con-  
stitution, and you but twenty-five;  
rather

rather too great a disparity this! but what I want in youth I will make up in wit and good humour.

Not Swift so loved his Stella, Scar-  
ron his Maintenon, or Waller his Sa-  
charissa, as I will love and sing thee,  
my wife elect—all those names, emi-  
nent as they were, shall give place to  
thine, Eliza.

Tell me in answer to this, that  
you approve and honour the proposal;  
and that you would (like the Spec-  
tator's mistress) have more joy in put-  
ting on an old man's slipper, than in  
associating with the gay, the volup-  
tuous and the young—

Adieu

[ 72 ]

—Adieu, my Simplicitia.

Yours,

TRISTRAM.

My

My dear Eliza,

**I** HAVE been within the verge of the gates of death: I was ill the last time I wrote to you, and apprehensive of what would be the consequence——My fears were but too well founded; for in ten minutes after I dispatch'd my letter, this poor fine spun frame of Yorick's gave way, and I broke a vessel in my breast, and could not stop the loss of blood till four this morning——I have filled all thy India handkerchiefs with it: it came, I think, from the heart——I fell asleep, thro' weakness, at six, and  
L
awoke

awoke with the bosom of my shirt  
steep'd in tears——

I dream'd I was sitting under the  
canopy of Indolence; and that thou  
cam'st into the room with a shawl in  
thy hand, and told me; “ My spirit  
“ had flown to thee to the Downs  
“ with tidings of my fate, and that  
“ you was come to administer what  
“ consolation filial affection could be-  
“ stow, and to receive my parting  
“ breath and blessing.”—With that,  
you folded the shawl about my waist,  
and kneeling, supplicated my atten-  
tion——

I awoke; but in what a frame, Oh,  
my God!—But thou wilt remember  
my

my tears, and put them all into thy bottle——Dear girl, I see thee; thou art for ever present to my fancy, embracing my feeble knees, and raising thy fine eyes to bid me be of comfort——

And when I talk to Lydia, the words of Esau, as utter'd by thee, perpetually ring in my ears.——

“ Bless me even also, my father”——

Blessing attend thee, thou child of my heart——My bleeding is quite stopp'd, and I feel the principle of life strong within me——so be not alarm'd, Eliza, I know I shall do well——

L. 2                      I have

I have eat my breakfast with hunger; and I write to thee with a pleasure arising from that prophetic impression in my imagination—

“ That all will terminate to our hearts content”——Comfort thyself eternally with this persuasion, “ That “ the best of beings” (as thou sweetly hast express’d it) “ could not by a “ combination of accidents, produce “ such a chain of events, merely to “ be the source of misery to the leading person engaged in them.”——

The observation was very applicable, very good, and very elegantly express’d: I wish my memory did justice to the wording of it——

Who

Who taught you the art of writing so sweetly, Eliza? You absolutely have exalted it to a science—When I am in want of ready cash, and ill health will permit my genius to exert itself, I shall print your letters as *Finish'd Essays*, by an *Unfortunate Indian Lady*!—The style is new, and would almost be a sufficient recommendation for their selling well, without merit; but their sense, natural ease and spirit, is not to be equal'd, I believe, in this section of the globe; nor, I'll answer for it, by any of your countrywomen in your's——

I have show'd your letter to Mrs. B——, and to half the literati in town: you shall not be angry with me  
for

for it, because I meant to do you honour by it. —

You cannot imagine how many admirers your epistolary productions have gain'd you, that never view'd your external merits—I only wonder where thou could'st acquire thy graces, thy goodness, thy accomplishments! so connected! so educated! Nature has surely study'd to make thee her peculiar care; for thou art (and not in my eyes alone) the best and fairest of all her works——

And so, this is the last letter thou art to receive from me, because the Earl of Chatham (I read in the papers) is got to the Downs, and the  
wind

wind (I find) is fair—if so, blessed woman, take my last, last farewell! Cherish the remembrance of me; think how I esteem, nay, how affectionately I love thee, and what a price I set upon thee.—Adieu, adieu, and with my adieu, let me give thee one freight rule of conduct, that thou hast heard from my lips in a thousand forms, but I concenter it in one word.

*Reverence Thyself.*

Adieu once more, Eliza; may no anguish of heart plant a wrinkle upon thy face till I behold it again; may no doubt or misgivings disturb the serenity of thy mind, or awaken a painful thought about thy children,  
for

for they are Yorick's, and Yorick is thy friend for ever.—

Adieu, adieu, adieu——

P. S. Remember, that “Hope shortens all journies by sweetening them;” so sing my little stanza on the subject, with the devotion of an hymn, every morning thou arise, and thou wilt eat thy breakfast with more comfort for it——Blessings rest, and Hygeia go with thee. May'st thou soon return in peace and affluence to illumine my night: I am, and shall be the last to deplore thy loss, and will be the first to congratulate and hail thy return.—

Fare thee well.—

F I N I S.